

Minutes of the meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee held in the Boardroom, J.W. Singleton Centre, Burlington, Ontario, on November 1st, 2011

Present

Amy McKenzie: **Chair** (Halton Council of Home and School Associations); Veerle Ryckewaert (Autism Ontario-Halton Chapter); Lori Aker (Alternate-Halton Down Syndrome Association); Jason Bartlett (Member at Large); Dianna Bower (Alternate-Trustee); Lynn Trevisan: **Vice-Chair** (Member at Large); Sherry Foster (Association for Bright Children); Rebecca Kennedy (Easter Seals Society); Judy Shiels (VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children); Jackie Bevers (Member at Large); Jason Barr (Alternate-Canadian Mental Health Association); Kristen Lochhead (Trustee); Jennifer Hlusko (Trustee); Lori Kafato (Alternate- Association for Bright Children); Diane Vandembossche (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton); Paulyne Lack (Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario); Heather Holden (Alternate-Learning Disabilities Association of Halton) **via telephone**; Maureen Smithers (Alternate-Halton Council of Home and School Associations)

Board Liaison and Resource Personnel:

David Boag (Superintendent); Sue Roszell (Principal of Special Education); Pamela Cooley (Assistant); Margaret Nimigan (HEPA); Margaret Kew (HSPA); Patricia Molnar (PSSP)

Regrets

Vicki De Mone (Alternate-Tourette Syndrome Association)

Absent

Lynne Gurzi (HDEAA); Karen Poole-Lawrence (Easter Seals Society); Radhika Subramanyan (Canadian Mental Health Association); Kathryn Bateman-Olmstead (Alternate-Trustee); Lisa Griffiths (PSSP)

0. OPENING

0.1. Welcome and Call to Order:

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm

0.2. Approval of the Agenda

J. Hlusko/V. Ryckewaert #40-11

“THAT the agenda be approved.”

CARRIED

1. PRESENTATION

1.1. PSSP

C. Koekoek and L. Stewart (Senior Managers of Professional Services) discussed the roles of professional services staff (social workers, psychologists, child and youth counsellors, and speech/language pathologists). Their power point will be forwarded to SEAC.

Discussion took place regarding SLP services. It was suggested to have an SLP come and present to clarify which services are available, including CCAC referral for language services at the secondary level and language referrals for students with ASD.

1.2. BIPSA-S.Roszell

S. Roszell reviewed the draft Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement. The power point will be sent out to SEAC. Any questions can be forwarded to S. Roszell. There was a request for the online survey data to contribute towards the plan.

2. CALL FOR NOTICES OF MOTION/REPORTS TO THE BOARD

None

3. ACTION

3.1. Minutes of October Meeting

J. Bartlett/L. Aker 41#-11

“THAT the Minutes of the October 4th, 2011 meeting be approved.”

CARRIED

3.2. Special Education Plan Review

The first set of standards has been sent out to SEAC for review. The next set of standards will be sent shortly and SEAC will discuss the standards at the December meeting.

The chair noted that a form has been created for suggested edits to the plan. It will be sent out shortly.

A request for the standards to be date stamped for the 2012-13 school year was made.

3.3. SEAC Tracking Form

The Chair will send the form out before the December meeting.

3.4. Monthly Reports

3.4.1. Safe Schools Action Teams Advisory Group

The conference at Rattlesnake Point was a success. There was a request for a copy of the presentation by Dr. Brown to be forwarded to SEAC. The Chair will look into this.

3.4.2. Protocol/Communications Committee

Report provided by J. Bartlett is listed in the Appendix.

3.4.3. Early Learning Program

There was a steering committee meeting on October 25th. Work is beginning for year 3.

3.4.4. Accessibility Committee

The next meeting is on November 3rd.

3.4.5. Equity and Inclusion Committee

Report provided by D. Vandenbossche is listed in the Appendix.

3.4.6. P.I.C

The conference was a success.

4. COMMUNICATION TO SEAC AND CURRENT SUCCESSES

4.1. Superintendent's Report

D. Boag reviewed the online survey. SEAC members gave feedback on the questions, which will be reviewed by the department. Once complete, a message will be put out to the system to invite parents to complete the survey. SEAC requested that parents are provided with a follow up of the data.

4.2. Association Reports

L. Aker – Halton Down Syndrome Association: A welcome to Imran Moon, the new alternate for the HDSA. November 1st-7th is National Down Syndrome Awareness week.

Association Report for Learning Disabilities Association of Halton provided by D. Vandenbosshe is listed in the Appendix.

S. Foster– Association for Bright Children: The Annual Conference was held last week which was very successful. If anyone would like more information about attending next year, they should contact S. Foster.

4.3. Trustee Reports

J. Hlusko noted that the boundary review committee for the North Burlington elementary school has started discussions.

5. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

6. SEAC DISCUSSION/QUESTION PERIOD

Discussion took place regarding self directed learning as an alternative program for gifted students. A self directed program is in place in the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board. D. Boag and J. Hlusko commented on the pros and cons of self directed learning.

7. NEXT AGENDA/ORDER PAPER

Key items on the agenda for next month: Special Education Plan review, Online Survey update. There will be no association presentation next month. LDAH will present in January.

8. ADJOURNMENT

8.1. Motion to Adjourn

S. Foster/J. Shiels #42-11

“THAT the meeting adjourn.”

CARRIED

Time: 9:00 pm

Appendix: Monthly Reports and Association Reports

Monthly Reports

Communications/Protocol Committee: J. Bartlett

Background

The Protocol and Communications committee operates under a dual mandate. Communications activities are currently given higher priority; they are the public face of SEAC and are often time sensitive. Protocol activities are vital to maintaining structure, order, and focus to SEAC meetings; these are internally focused activities which are not time sensitive and are accordingly given a lower priority.

Communications Activities

Better communications channel(s) for SEAC to communicate with parents

Paper email system up at IEP night collected 46 email addresses. Committee met with Bruce Smith (HDSB CIO) and David Boag on October 19th to confirm our needs and met October 25th to confirm email message format and continue web site design discussion. Committee has scheduled standing meetings on SEAC meeting nights from 6:00-7:00pm in Trustee room.

Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant Application

PRO grant application was not approved. Requests to the Ministry for clarification on reason(s) for denial remain unanswered. Committee is evaluating ability to facilitate parent coffee chat sessions with a greatly reduced budget. David Boag is working on finding locations for daytime (9:30-11:00am) and evening (7:30-9:00pm) sessions across the region.

SEAC Parent Survey

Draft of survey questions had been circulated to SEAC with deadline of Sept 16th, 2011 for comments. Survey questions have been sent to HDSB research group for preparation and approval prior to issuance. The survey is planned to be shown to SEAC at Nov 1, 2011 meeting.

Protocol Activities

SEAC Committee Involvement

List of sitting committees supplied by Don Vrooman is attached in appendix A. This list is pending updates and may not be complete, as such it for information only at this time. Once list is ratified by HDSB (David Boag and/or David Euale) it will be circulated to SEAC for determination of what additional committees would benefit from SEAC participation.

SEAC Committee Striking protocol

Request has been made to review aspects of how a new SEAC is formed and ratify any practices that differ from established policy into a new policy for SEAC approval. Considering the current SEAC is beginning a new term this item will be tabled for future consideration.

Appendix A

Preliminary HDSB committee listing as supplied by Don Vrooman - for information only.

<copy of email message follows>

Hi Jason,

Here is a list of the HDSB committees I'm aware of, but it might not be complete. There are a variety of committees, some of which SEAC members or anyone could audit, others where SEAC members might participate, and still others where SEAC might have no interest or opportunity to participate. Dave Boag or the Director might be better contacts for statutory or staff committees. I've copied them both.

Trustee Committees (membership limited to trustees, proceedings open to public)

- Program & Accommodation Committee
- Communication Committee
- Policy, By-law & Governance Committee

Statutory Committees (Participation may or may not be appropriate)

- Audit Committee
- Student Discipline Committee
- Special Education Advisory Committee
- Parent Involvement Committee
- Joint Health & Safety
- Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Students (SALEP)

Staff Advisory Committees

- Active & Safe Routes to School
- French Advisory
- IT Advisory
- Equity & Inclusion (formerly Cultural Proficiency & Diversity)
- Environment
- Poverty Reduction and Social Issues
- Specialist High Skills Major
- Staff & Leadership Development
- Wellness Advisory

Trustee Advisory Committees

- Transportation (will exist if approved by trustees on 5 Oct 2011)

Note, ad hoc or advisory committees are created from time to time for specific purposes, including Boundary Review Committees or Program and Accommodation Review Committees. SEAC's interest would vary.

Hope this is helpful.

Don

Equity and Inclusion Committee: D. Vandenbossche

Superintendent Yaw Obeng provided a brief update regarding the group's purpose in respect to the Equity Strategy. Four meetings are scheduled for the year and the group will be reviewing each of the 8 areas of the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy from the Ministry.

The Ministry has requested that Boards develop their Faith Accommodations Guidelines this year. The Administrative Procedure for Faith Accommodations in draft form has been vetted by this committee as well as many others and is ready to go to Admin Council. Trustees have requested that the Administrative Procedure go to the Board as an information item after Admin Council.

There was much discussion regarding employment equity. HDSB HR Executive Officer will form a small committee to explore best practices as the Ministry has requested that Boards address employment equity this year. Committee members at the table shared information regarding practices at other sectors, for example Halton Region, Community Development Halton, Halton Newcomer Strategy, to name a few.

Equitable vocabulary list and criteria for identifying bias was shared. Policy and procedure needs to be looked at through equity lens and strategies for reviewing content need to be developed.

The Ministry has asked for a progress report re: implementation. HDSB will focus on accountability and transparency this year.

Association Reports

Learning Disabilities Association of Halton: D. Vandenbossche

At Learning Disabilities Association of Halton we believe that the parents of our children with learning disabilities, professionals and paraprofessionals need to possess as much knowledge as possible about current resources and services for students with learning disabilities. Therefore LDAH is hosting a lecture series to inform our members and others interested about current practices in the field of learning disabilities. Last week a handful of people came out to hear Cathy Smith talk about correcting Dyslexia and ADD the Davis Way. On Saturday November 19th from 9:15 am to 11:15 am, participants can hear Dr. Stephen Barker present ADHD: What it is and what can you do about it. Parents, teachers, and other interested professionals can register online at www.ldahalton.ca or by phoning the resource centre at 905-333-1977.

LDAH is organizing a one day workshop on April 13th to focus on reading. We have secured a hall in Oakville and will have plenty of room for interested associations to set up a table of resources. If interested please let me know. A flyer will be ready shortly.

LDAH Board is meeting tomorrow evening with the Lawrence Barns, CEO of LDAO to discuss fundraising strategies and succession planning.

Our Reading and Keyboarding classes continue to be well received and our students are gaining necessary skills and confidence.

Sudbury LDA recently released a CD titled I Learn Differently, Please Teach Me Differently. We have requested several more copies for our library so will be ready to share this very informative workshop shortly.